



WHITE MOUNTAINS

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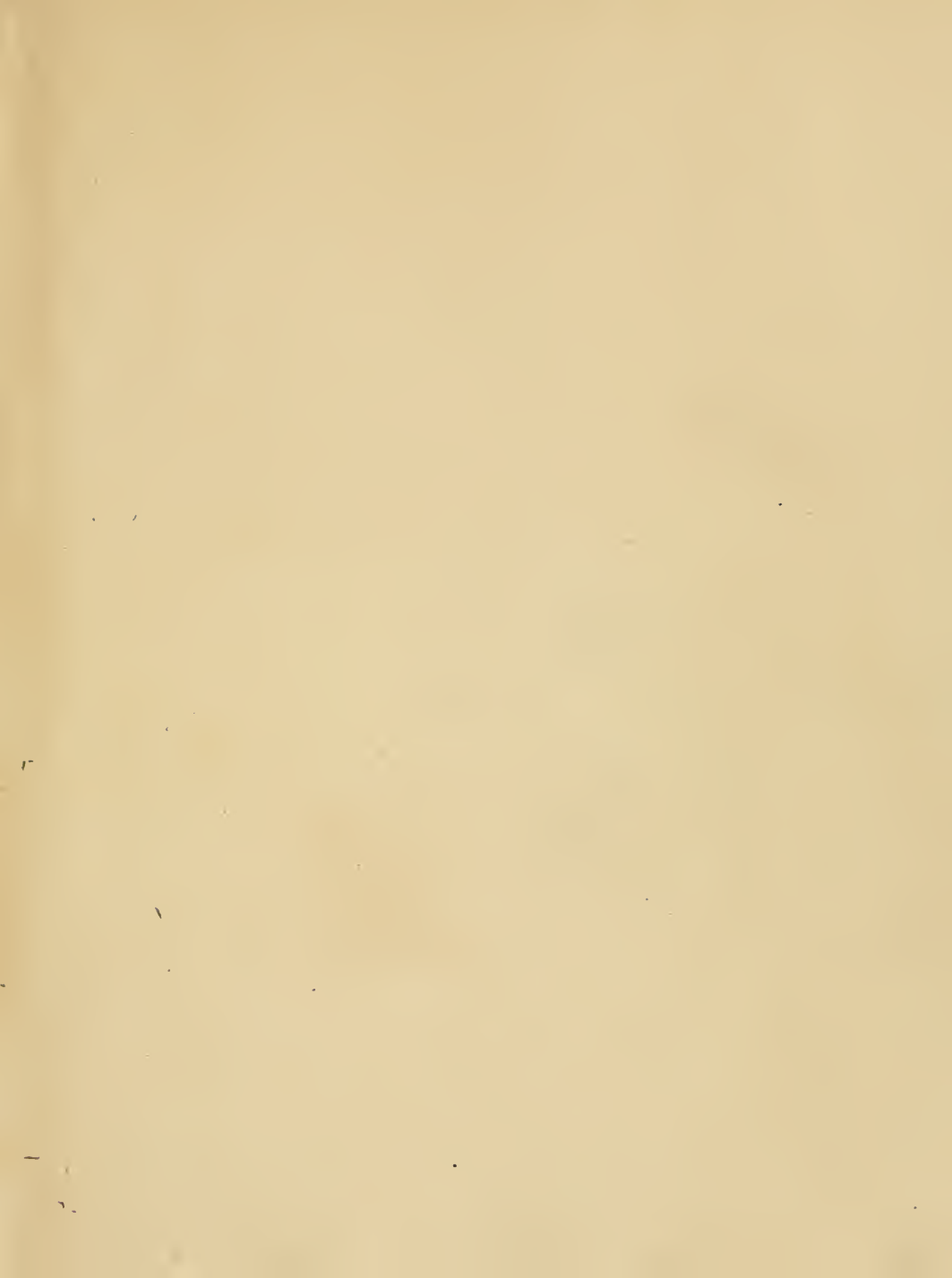
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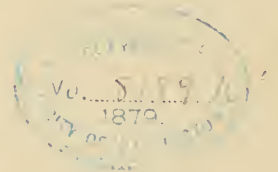
IN THE

WHITE MOUNTAINS.

WITH DESCRIPTIONS

BY

M. F. SWEETSER.



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PREFACE.



THE object of this volume is to afford to visitors among the White Mountains a souvenir of their grand scenery, as well as to enable those who have not yet seen them to obtain an idea of their exceeding majesty and beauty. In the snug houses on the slopes of Beacon Hill and Murray Hill, when the blasts of winter are sweeping the darkened streets, and the family gathers around the evening fireside, these views may serve to bring back the memories of past days of summer gladness, and renew a thousand fading impressions of beauty and delight.

In one respect at least, and that an important one, the pictures herein contained are superior to any other collection of illustrations of the White Mountains. They are in no way idealized or exaggerated, as is customary in such works, but present faithful transcripts of the actual scenes as painted by the sun. They were printed by the heliotype process from photographs taken from the objects themselves, and hence are as nearly accurate as it is possible to have them. The impressions were made with printers' ink, and are as permanent as the letter-press; so that the fidelity of a photograph is secured, without its perishability.

It is also hoped that the descriptions appended to the pictures may be of some value, as showing the localities of the various scenes, and their relations to other points among the highlands. If ability and enthusiasm always went together with equal step and parallel course (which they do not), these notes would be not altogether unworthy of the objects that they commemorate, since the writer has been for years an ardent lover of the mountains, and has explored their highest and remotest peaks, and their deepest and most terrible ravines.



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THE WHITE MOUNTAINS.



ANTHONY TROLLOPE, the charming English novelist and delineator of life in the old cathedral-towns, once frankly confessed that he had a vague idea that the White Mountains were a sort of link between the Rocky Mountains and the Alleghanies, inhabited by Mormons, Indians, or black bears; and then goes on to say, "That there was a district in New England containing mountain-scenery *superior to much that is yearly crowded by tourists in Europe*, that this is to be reached with ease by railways and stage-coaches, and that it is dotted with huge hotels almost as thickly as they lie in Switzerland, I had no idea."

This region, which already enjoys a transatlantic fame, covers an area of over twelve hundred square miles, bounded in a large way by the lake-country of New Hampshire on the south, and the Connecticut Valley on the west and north. The eastern limits are less easily determined, since the mountain system of Maine is interlocked with the northern White Mountains, and stretches away to the north-east for over a hundred miles. The Edinburgh encyclopedist, indeed, calls Mount Katahdin the eastern outpost of the range; but the peaks in Maine are in semi-detached groups, separated by wide valleys, and so remote in the wilderness that they are seldom visited by tourists. The White Mountains, as regarded by unscientific persons (and map-makers as well), stop at the border of Maine.

Although actually nearer the equator than Mont Blanc is, and on the same parallel as Bordeaux, Bologna, Genoa, and Belgrade, the climate of this region is much more severe than that of Switzerland at the same altitudes, and the alpine region is encountered at lower levels. If the summit of Mount Washington were two thousand feet higher, it would be covered with perpetual snow, even in the face of the summer sun of America. As it is, the snow-banks remain about the head of Tuckerman's Ravine throughout June and

The White Mountains.

July, hundreds of feet long, and in their lower parts hardened into glacial ice. The sudden changes of temperature thus induced between points but a few miles apart give rise to astonishing varieties in the fauna and flora of the region, which have deeply interested the botanists and entomologists of adjacent States, and called forth their careful study. The sumptuous volumes recently published by the State of New Hampshire, under the direction of Professor Hitchcock, contain minute descriptions of the plants and insects found upon the highlands, with the fullest details of the geology and climatology thereof. The flora is that of the Canadian division, as distinguished from the Alleghanian division, which stops at Lake Winnepesaukee and North Conway; and its chief members are the pines and cedars, darkening the mountain-slopes; the maples, birches, and oaks, enriching the autumnal landscape with most glorious color; and the elms, which so adorn the meadows of Conway and Lancaster. Ferns and flowers of great variety ornament the glens, and infinite quantities of delicious berries are found on the ridges. There are fifty species of alpine plants, which are found nowhere in New England save on these highlands; and a careful writer on the subject has said, "The wind-swept summits of our White Mountains are to the botanist the most interesting locality east of the Mississippi; for there are found the lingering remnants of a flora once common, probably, to all New England, but which, since the close of the glacial epoch, has, with few exceptions, retreated to Arctic America."

The geological history of the district is very interesting, and has been recorded by some of the foremost scientific men in America and England. Floods of molten rock have poured over the country, level as a lake, hotter than Phlegethon, and hardening into vast areas of granite. Centuries, or it may have been hundreds of centuries, later, the ocean swept its blue tides around the bases and far up into the passes of the mountains, leaving there its sedimentary rocks and marine fossils to bear testimony to the great invasion. The White Mountains were a group of islands, on whose rocky shores the ancient sea broke, carving the record of its victory as legibly as Trajan inscribed his triumphs on the Iron Gates of the Danube. Next came the glacial age, when New Hampshire suffered the climate and possessed the appearance of Greenland, buried under thousands of feet of ice, a huge pall of death, enduring for centuries, and slowly moving toward the south with irresistible force.

Out of all these convulsions Nature at last wrought her perfect work, and prepared the land for the dwelling of man. He, in turn, began a career of improving and changing the face of the hills, and governing their life. The

The White Mountains.

wolf and the mountain-lynx, once so common here, are now as extinct as the dodo, or as the luckless Indians whose wigwams arose by the corn-fields on the intervalles. The echoes of the rangers' rifles have been taken up by the roar of blasting-powder, opening pathways for commerce and travel through the dark defiles; and this, in turn, is replaced by the long screech of locomotives storming up the slopes.

Every surveying-party which returns to Washington from the Far West brings tidings of some new region of natural wonders, stupendous mountains, dizzy gorges, thunderous waterfalls, until at last we have surpassed the Alps, and emulate the Caucasus. Some one once called the White Mountains "the Switzerland of America," and the foolish phrase has since been on every lip. It is not quite clear why we should have a "Switzerland of America" (at least until the *Revue des Deux Mondes* finds a "Yo-Semite of Europe"); but, if the phrase must be used, it belongs to the Sierra Nevada, or the Snowy Range of Colorado.

The chief mountain-resort of America, however, will remain in New Hampshire for many decades, whatever superior attractions the Western lands may develop, because the largest cities of the continent are within a day's ride, and hundreds of populous towns are almost within sight. Several first-class railroads reach the edge of the district, and one of them penetrates it from side to side, affording the best opportunities for reaching the sweet pastoral villages of the plains or the dark glens beyond. From these grand routes stage-roads and turnpikes stretch away in other directions, and logging-roads enter the deep woods. These, in turn, interlace with scores of paths cut through the forests and upon the mountains by the hotel-keepers and villagers, for the sole object of making easy the ways to scenes of grandeur and beauty. The Appalachian Mountain Club has had several important paths constructed of late years, devising their routes with great skill, and directing them upon noble view-points. Within the region thus developed there are nine hotels of the first class, accommodating from three hundred to five hundred guests each; a score or more of second-class houses; and hundreds of boarding-houses, varying in pretensions, from the well-supplied *pensions* of North Conway and Bethlehem to the old-fashioned farm-houses of the hill-people. The villages just mentioned can accommodate more than twelve hundred guests each at one time; and the hamlets of Gorham, Campton, Lancaster, Franconia, Conway, Jefferson Hill, and Jackson, have quarters for many hundreds more. All tastes and purses may now be suited in the wide variety which ranges from the palatial luxuries of the great hotels at five dollars a day

The White Mountains.

to the antique simplicity of the sequestered farm-houses at five dollars a week. There is also every variety of scenery here, amid which the summer loiterer may find the charms most congenial to his spirit, or combine their varying beauties in a rich contrast of effects. Does he seek the sweet and reposeful contiguity of emerald meadows, dotted with most exquisitely shaped trees, and overlooked by distant blue peaks?—then let him find out Fryeburg on the east, nestling by the fair and fruitful intervalles of the Saco; or Lancaster on the west, the queen of the upper Connecticut Valley. Must he have blue waters of highland lakes to mirror the mountain-forms while he floats over the liquid crystal in some dainty little boat, deriding Fahrenheit?—let him seek Centre Harbor, on many-islanded Winnepesaukee; or the lonely inn which looks down upon the reflection of the proud purple peak of Chocorua, in the lake below; or the beautiful tarns higher up in the hill-country, at the bases of the main ranges. Does he crave the most poetic and fascinating view of the great group of peaks, seen *en famille*, and at such a distance, that all their ruggedness and savagery are replaced by soft veiling tints and rare atmospheric effects?—such grace he shall find at North Conway and Bethlehem, Shelburne and Jefferson Hill, and, better than all others, at Sugar Hill. Nor should he forget Bethel, the ancient hamlet by the Androscoggin; and Campton, viewing the grand Sandwich peaks up the Mad-River Valley; and Littleton, commanding such glorious vistas from her inwalling hills. But the majority of travellers prefer to come into the immediate presence of the highest mountains, to face their frowning cliffs, be overshadowed by their immense ridges, and hear the music of their white cascades. For these there is Jackson, lifting its little church-spire in a wild and solitary glen; Waterville, hemmed in by lofty and noble peaks and solemn ridges; the Glen House, in face of the Presidential Range; the Profile House, surrounded by the rarest curiosities of nature; and the Crawford and Fabyan Houses, overlooked by the supreme summits of the highlands. In such a delightful region, who can go amiss?



FRANCONIA NOTCH, ECHO LAKE, AND PROFILE HOUSE.

THE FRANCONIA NOTCH, ECHO LAKE, AND THE PROFILE HOUSE.



WHEN Fredrika Bremer contrasted the Franconia region with the Swedish districts of Dalecarlia and Norsland, she gave great praise to these latter by the simple fact of the comparison. The ruling charms of this delightful wilderness, according to the gifted Scandinavian traveller, are not its rocks and mountains, its chasms and ravines, but the affluence of foliage, and the brightness of the mountain-waters. And from our artist's standpoint, on the top of Bald Mountain, less than two miles distant from the Profile House, these two excellent traits of the Franconia region are visible as from no other place. In comparison with the stupendous mass of Mount Lafayette, rising far into the heavens, close at hand, the craggy knoll of Bald Mountain appears almost insignificant; and yet it rises very picturesquely above the blue lake below, and looks far out over the Green Mountains of Vermont and the delicious valleys which extend towards Lancaster. On the south is the fair bosom of Echo Lake, that brightest gem of the mountains, whose waters are of the most exquisite purity and clearness, and are furrowed throughout the summer by a flotilla of pretty pleasure-boats. Although Starr King ranked this mountain-tarn above even the Profile itself, as the chief attraction of Franconia, it is evident that he could not have rowed out upon its waters, since he describes it with much detail as emptying into the Pemigewasset; thence to pass into the Merrimac, and move the wheels of Nashua and Lowell. In point of fact, the stream seeks the beach-levels through the Ammonoosuc and Connecticut Rivers.

Beyond the lake is an expanse of dense green forest, amid which the high white sides of the Profile House rise like a palace of Aladdin, and, to the minds of the initiated, radiating a certain warmth of human life and luxury throughout the cold and silent wilderness. Beyond is the Franconia Notch, stretching away under line after line of gray-topped ridges, and glorified at evening by the level rays of the setting sun, which surge magnificently up the defile, while the shadows of the western peaks rise higher and higher on the opposite walls.

More than any other pass in the White Mountains this has called forth the loving praises of our authors, and the brilliant chapters of Mr. Prime still form its best description. Even Harriet Martineau, who was so chary of eulogy for all things, natural, human, or superhuman, found the word "noble" the only one to apply here, and uttered it with a right good heart. Looking over the bright expanse of Echo Lake, the pictured cliffs, the rich-hued forests, we find a more appropriate adjective, and call the scene, in all its aspects and suggestions, simply *beautiful*.



THE PROFILE.

THE PROFILE, FRANCONIA NOTCH.



HERE the road passes Profile Lake, near the Profile House, a guide-board directs the attention upward, and one of the most impressive sights of all this region of wonders bursts upon the vision. There, on the side of the opposing mountain, more than a thousand feet above the road, and vividly outlined against the sky, is the semblance of a colossal human profile, with an expression of intense weariness and melancholy, as if some heaven-defying Prometheus of the West had been chained to the red rocks of Mount Cannon until the hardness of his heart was reflected by the petrification of his head. This is the great Profile, which for over seventy years has been gazed upon, with varying emotions, by many myriads of travellers. For the slaves of the guide-book, who feel it their solemn duty to "do" every thing therein spoken of, any hour will suffice; but the reverent pilgrim of Nature approaches this point of view only at late afternoon, when the great face is vividly outlined against the crimson glories of the western sky, and its pathetic and expectant expression aptly combines with the sadness of declining day. For thousands of years that grim simulacrum has faced the driving sleet of winter and the quivering lightnings of summer with silent patience and monumental faith; and has looked down upon the red Indians, countless as the leaves of the forest, as they poured down from the remote West upon the rolling plains of the New-England wilderness before the dawn of American history. There are, indeed, traditions that the aborigines used to offer a rude form of worship here as to a symbol of Manitou himself, kindling their sacrificial fires on the shores of the crystalline lake below. But these Druid rites could not avail to save the doomed race; for during Queen Anne's War the pale rangers of Massachusetts destroyed their last hamlet of wigwams on the banks of the Pemigewasset, and the crash of the Puritan volleys re-echoed from the rocky brow of the mountain-visage. Then came the measured and resistless advance of the Anglo-American race, following the same order of battle which has conquered Caffraria, New Zealand, and America,—first the hunters and trappers, then the pioneers and farmers, then the tourists, and at last the railway-builders. Shattering the primeval silence of the Gale-River Valley, and filling the ravines of Mount Lafayette with smoke and roaring, the iron steeds now pause within a mile of the Great Stone Face, and ere long will descend the Pemigewasset Valley on their levelled bands of steel.



THE PROFILE HOUSE.

THE PROFILE HOUSE.



THE Franconia Mountains, though less lofty and majestic than their neighbors on the east, are in many respects more beautiful and rich in restful and tranquillizing influences. The woods have not suffered from fire to the extent that the White-Mountain forests have ; and now stand in all their primeval strength and richness, sweeping down from the crests of the ridges, and overarching the narrow road below with their abundant frondage. The sweet and tranquil lakelets nestling under the rugged cliffs, the wonderful and unique natural phenomena of the rocks, and the positive affluence of the sylvan scenery, give a peculiar charm to the whole Franconian region. Though the heights press upon the glen more closely than do the walls of the White-Mountain Notch, there is less of oppression and constraint in their effects, so fresh and attractive are the adornments which Nature has placed upon them. There are no memories of tragedy here, no sombre mementoes of disaster, no prolonged slopes of sand and rock, but bright color and wavy grace, mirror-like blue waters, gayly-tinted ledges, and unnumbered legions of hardy trees, scaling the steep inclines, and fearlessly facing the batteries of the elements. Among these verdant glens rises the Pemigewasset River, which ripples away down the Notch, and along that fair valley below, until, joining its crystal flood with the outflow of Lake Winnepesaukee, it forms the Merrimac, and hurries by many a busy city to meet the sea at gray old Newburyport.

The human centre of all this family of woody peaks and sunlit tarns is the Profile House, with its group of villas and out-buildings, occupying the highest place in the Franconia Notch, 1,974 feet above the sea, and lifting a mass of white light against the dark verdure which rises on every hand. On one side towers the long and elephantine ridge of Cannon Mountain, crested with a siege-gun of stone ; and on the other are the foot-hills of the lofty and crag-crowned Mount Lafayette, from whose summit one can look into Maine, Vermont, and Canada. None of the pleasure-resorts of Northern New England have such charms for New-Yorkers and Philadelphians as this secluded glen enjoys ; and here scores of those graceful beauties of the Empire City, who are at once the prides of America and the idols of young Europe, fill the August days with more than vernal joys.



ECHO LAKE, FRANCONIA NOTCH.

ECHO LAKE, FRANCONIA NOTCH.



MID the noble brotherhood of green peaks called the Franconia Mountains, the spirit of awful mystery is petrified in the Profile, grandeur is exemplified in the vast masses of Mount Lafayette and Cannon Mountain, and weirdness, singularity, the grotesque phases of Nature's playful moods, are manifested in the Flume and the Pool. But the culmination of pure and simple beauty, the crown of grace, and the mirror of brightness, appears in Echo Lake, the limpid tarn which lies in the northern end of the Notch, high above the Franconian plains. The highway from the Profile House to Littleton skirts one side of it, and the ambitious little railway from Bethlehem station is on the opposite shore; but both are hidden by the luxuriant forests which sweep down on all sides, save where the boat-houses rise to shelter Franconia's mimic navy. On the east are bold and picturesque cliffs, rising from the shores, and bracing the lower terraces of Mount Lafayette with stupendous buttresses of rugged rock, draped with climbing green vines, and hanging out the banners of the hardy trees, whose roots are fixed in the clefts of the precipice. Glorious tints of sunset fall upon these high walls and mounting pillars when the lake below has been shrouded in twilight, and the night is approaching from the eastern sea. At that hour the environs of Echo Lake are endowed with a profound fascination, and fairly glow with poetic splendor, while scores of glad-hearted visitors float upon the glassy waters in the pretty little boats of the Profile-House squadron. Then, too, the deep-toned shouts and the silvery laughter of the evening voyagers are thrown back by the cliffs as if in badinage: and the cannon on the western shore is fired from time to time to arouse sterner reverberations, rattling back from Artist's Bluff and Bald Mountain, and swelling away through the distant ravines in a sinking surge of sound. You may close your eyes, and let this ominous echo bring to mind the iron hail of Petersburg or Plevna; but to the quick vision the scene suggests some sweet and sylvan lakelet in an Arcadia of the Knickerbockers.



THE FLUME.

THE FLUME.



THE Flume House occupies a very beautiful situation on a terrace at the southern end of the Franconia Notch, and overlooks the extensive vistas of the Pemigewasset Valley, whose scenery is so widely famous for its pastoral beauty and idyllic grace. During the long, bright days of summer, the Campton lowlands are drenched with sunshine, and glorious in color; and the bright stream flows downward thereby, offering its crystal refreshment to the dreamy-eyed cattle, as it had given it to the mountain-bears above.

It is less than a mile from the hotel to the great natural curiosity from which it derives its name, and the road stops at the long ledges which rise like a *glacis* to the castle-gate above. There the wonderful chasm begins, and extends along the flank of the mountain for seven hundred feet, with a width of from ten to twenty feet, and a depth of nearly sixty feet. On either side are perpendicular walls of granite, prolonged by the tall shafts of the forest-trees above, and overarched by a green canopy of foliage; while the floor of the gorge is littered by fragments of rock, amongst which purls and babbles the rill from the icy reservoirs above. Rich mosses, freshened by the exhalations from below, form a graceful cornice to the walls, and adorn their sides with bits of vivid tapestry; and summer-day visitors, sauntering along the plank-walk which lies by the brookside, enjoy the comforting dampness and coolness of the sunless depths, no matter what the heat in the valley outside.

Here I have met Emerson, the sphynx of Concord, rambling solitary among the trees, and doubtless spiritually attended by a kindred group of ancient sages, as old as Hesiod, or at least as Plato, while he mused upon what he has so mystically called "the good rocks, those patient waiters." Starr King, one of the most enthusiastic of the earlier visitors to the Flume, insisted that every one who wished to see it properly should go alone, "quietly, and with reverence for the Spirit out of whose perennial bounty all beauty pours."

If this brook-worn gorge thus suffices to amaze and attract us, what should we say of that vast and terrible Stygian river on the other side of our continent, where for hundreds of miles the Colorado rolls its black waters along the bottom of a cleft in the rocky vestment of the earth, between perpendicular banks a mile high, silent, lifeless, sepulchral, and traversing the lands of an extinct nation? But immensity does not secure a proportionate notice among men, else the Yukon, rolling its huge floods through the Alaska lowlands, should be famous, and the tiny Ilissus, flowing hard by the Athenian Acropolis, should be unknown: wherefore we may prize this little rocky corridor of New England above the empire-dividing chasm of New Spain.



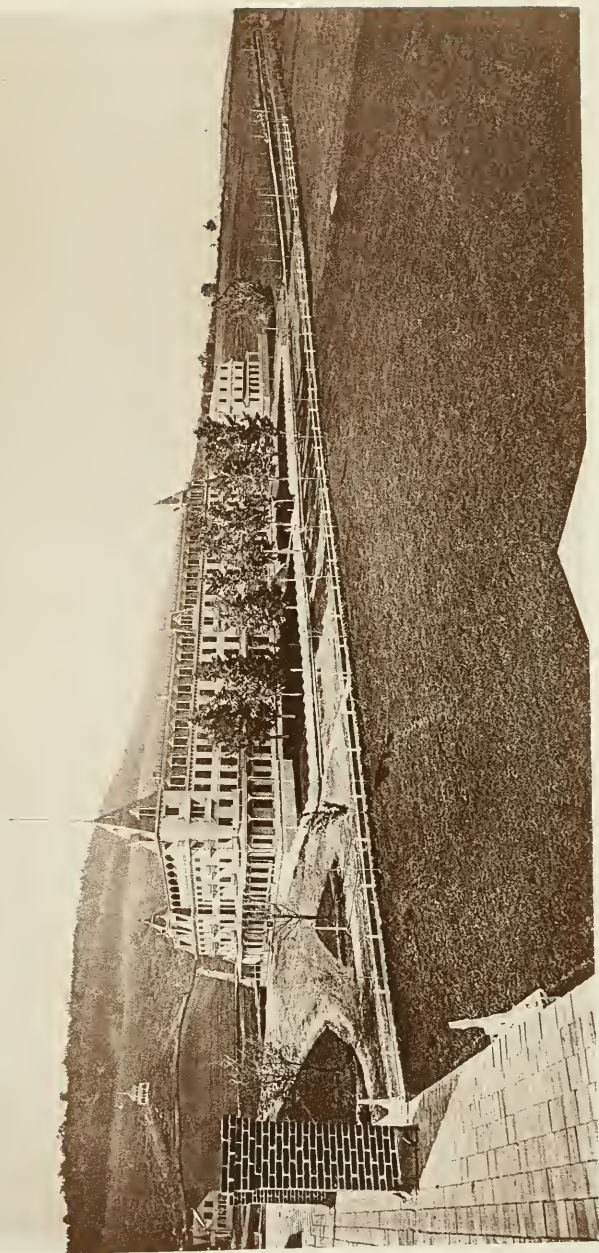
VIEW IN BETHLEHEM.

BETHLEHEM.



FOR many years North Conway enjoyed an easy supremacy among the resorts about the White Mountains; but within the last decade she has been well-nigh dethroned by her rival beyond the mountains,—Bethlehem. The richest colors of our famous artists,—Inness, Kensett, Champney, and scores of others; the most fervent rhapsodies of our great writers,—Starr King, Whittier, and many another; and the marvellous legends of the adjacent country,—gave lavish tribute to the village by the Saco, while that by the Ammonoosuc remained silent and unknown. But now all that is changed, and the quondam darling of poet and artist may well be satisfied if she can partake in a joint sovereignty,—she queen in the East, and Bethlehem queen in the West. When the railroad-builders, those Goths and Vandals of our age, reached North Conway, and stretched their rigid trestles and gravel-banks across her exquisite meadows, the charm was broken forever. The dweller at Bethlehem may often sigh for the Cathedral Woods of Conway, the great elms, idyllic poems of grace, and the lovely intervalles which sweep out to the foot of Moat Mountain; but he who passes the summer at North Conway will yearn for the cool northern breezes which daily visit the rival hamlet almost a thousand feet higher in the air, and will crave that magnificent prospect over many a glen and ridge which reaches half way to Canada.

The three great terrors which have so often swept the Old World from the Volga to the Shannon, and spared not even our young land of the morning, have left Bethlehem exempt. Pestilence could never storm this green fortress of health and purity; and the hostile arms of Briton and Indian stopped short at Jefferson, fifteen miles away. But famine has come much nearer, during the early days of the hill-towns, ninety years ago, when the half-starved pioneers were obliged to load a team with potash, their only product, and have it drawn away by four oxen, to be exchanged for provisions at Concord, Mass. During the four weeks consumed by the wagon in its slow journey of three hundred and forty miles the inhabitants lived on roots and herbs, dug from the ground and cooked by the brave women who had followed their husbands to this outer skirmish-line of civilization. In these days the great Sinclair House draws its manifold supplies in far less time from Iowa and Florida and the Bermudas.



THE MAPLEWOOD HOTEL.

THE MAPLEWOOD HOTEL.



NEAR the place where the Bethlehem ridge breaks down towards the Ammonoosuc Valley on the east, about half a league from the village and an equal distance from the railway-station, is one of the best view-points on the sunset side of the mountains. The entire Presidential Range is seen thence, from the high and clear-cut spires of Adams and Jefferson in the north to the bold crests of Monroe, Franklin, and the other mountains which fall away to the Crawford Notch, terraced like a stairway of giants. And in the centre, occupying that prominent and conspicuous position to which its enormous mass and supreme height entitle it, is the lordly chieftain of the group, Mount Washington, visible from base to crest, with the iron track winding up its rugged slopes, and the little cluster of storm-defying houses on the summit. But no adjectives can be veneered on to these bold topographical details that shall even hint at the superlative glory of the scene during the *élite* hours of the early morning, when the range assumes the richest hues of black and purple before the rosy east, and the last hour of the day, during which the magic of the sunset-light transforms the great range into a world of amethyst, as fair to the eye as Bunyan's Delectable Mountains.

On this site stands the latest-built and handsomest of the great summer resorts of rural New Hampshire, — the Maplewood Hotel, which has grown rapidly from the small boarding-house of six years ago to the present immense caravansary. Of all the hotels of Bethlehem, this is the nearest to Nature's heart, in its happy separation from the white-paint glories of a new American village and from the chatter of the street.

There is one view-point within a few minutes' walk of the Maplewood which no one should fail to visit. It is known as Crufts' Ledge, in honor of the Bostonian who built the hotel, and gives a prospect of the Presidential Range fully as fine as that obtained from any place on Bethlehem Street. But the chief charm is the view of the vast and ponderous Twin-Mountain group, supported on the west by the Franconia Mountains, whose peaks of Haystack and Mount Lafayette are as boldly advanced into the sky, and as sharp and craggy, as any lover of the sensational in scenery could desire. Some writers have likened these peaks to the majestic Jungfrau, queen of Alps; but such a similitude is a blank absurdity: and if we must follow the vogue, and cross the Atlantic for comparisons, there are more fitting ones in the Saxon Switzerland, and even among the Sabine Mountains, where Soracte and Gennaro rise over the gray Campagna of Rome.



FABYAN HOUSE.

THE FABYAN HOUSE.



R. STORRS once said that the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth found before them "an empty continent;" but it was not until the conquest of Canada, in 1760, that their descendants ventured far into that great untrodden wilderness. Among these pioneers was young Eleazar Rosebrook, who left his home in the Blackstone Valley, and settled on the Upper Connecticut, and, after winning his title of captain in the border conflicts of the Revolutionary war, moved into the heart of the White Mountains, and established a farm on the present Fabyan site. His daughter married Abel Crawford, and bore eight stalwart sons, the lords of the hills, the strong-armed men who made new order in many a chaotic place. One of these, Ethan Allen, the king of the mountain-guides and the terror of the bears and wild-cats for leagues around, inherited the Rosebrook Place, and opened a public-house there, as early as 1803, which was destroyed by fire sixteen years later. Another hotel on this site suffered the same fate; and its successor, built by Fabyan himself, and containing a hundred rooms, was burned about the year 1850. In the olden time there was a legend that an Indian once stood on the great mound of the Giant's Grave near by, and waved a flaming torch, while he shouted in the night, "No pale-face shall take deep root here!—this the Great Spirit whispered in my ear." When the present Fabyan House was erected, in 1872-73, its constructors levelled the Giant's Grave, as if the evil spell should be removed when the mount of cursing vanished.

Near the house, whose white front extends for over three hundred feet along the valley, are noisy junctions of roads and railways, with their ever-flowing tides of humanity. But he who can look over and beyond this brawling life of the hour may see the great plateau of the Ammonoosuc ascending gradually to the eastward, covered with dense forests; and at its end, gashed and torn by many a sharp throe of Nature, and crested with bare and rocky peaks, rises the stately line of the Presidential Range, seen in full panoramic view as it can be from no other point on the sunset side of the great hills. It is but seven miles away, and no minor ridge intervenes to diminish the majestic effect of this mightiest wave-crest of New England's rocks and forests. The scene is in the highest degree grand and sombre, almost oppressive, when clouds blacken over the peaks, or the long sierra is shrouded in the gloom of late twilight.



THE OLD WILLEY HOUSE.

THE OLD WILLEY HOUSE.



LONG after the last war-party of Canadian Indians had driven their Puritan captives from the coast-villages northward through the White-Mountain Notch, the unknown and forgotten pass was re-discovered by a wandering hunter; and the State of New Hampshire soon built a road through it, applying for that purpose the proceeds of a confiscated Tory estate. Thereafter there was a great amount of travel over the new turnpike, whereby the farmers of the Coös country carried their produce to the coast in huge wagons, and brought back their needed household supplies. The building now known as the Willey House was erected in 1793, three miles from the site of the Crawford House, and at the foot of Mount Willey, to serve as an inn for entertaining the farmers and teamsters who travelled over this rugged road; and Mr. Samuel Willey, jun., occupied and enlarged it in 1825 and 1826.

Early in the summer of 1826 a frightful avalanche of rock and earth fell from the side of Mount Willey, and awakened the liveliest alarm in the denizens of the house. But a long peace ensued, during the drought which throughout that flaming summer parched all the hill-country, and reduced its soil to light powder. The prolonged hush of intense heat was only the preliminary of a natural convulsion which shook the hills to their foundations, when (late in August) the windows of heaven were opened, and for day after day a tremendous plunging rain descended, and awful black clouds filled the Notch to its bottom, while the rivers swelled to devastating torrents, and the flanks of the ridges were scarred by long slides,—the tracks of avalanches, which hurled ruin upon the valleys below.

Travellers who journeyed through the Notch after the storm, painfully struggling over the *débris* of the dismantled mountains, found the Willey House standing intact in the midst of a frightful chaos of sand, rock, and broken trees, which had flowed like a torrent down the side of Mount Willey. A high ledge at the rear of the house had split the massive stream, and caused it to flow to right and left, leaving an island on which the buildings stood, and re-uniting its divergent currents below. But no sign of life was there, save the disordered beds and the scattered clothing, which told of a hasty flight into the night and storm. Two days later, searching-parties found the bodies of Mr. and Mrs. Willey and their hired man buried in the avalanche; and afterwards the remains of two of the Willey children and another servant were found. Three of the children of the family were buried so deeply beneath the ruins, that no trace of them was ever discovered. The entire family and its dependants were exterminated.



JACOB'S LADDER, MOUNT WASHINGTON RAILWAY.

JACOB'S LADDER, ON THE MOUNT-WASHINGTON RAILWAY.



AS the train ascends the long slope of the mountain, its progress is so slow, that the traveller can comprehend and enjoy the varying and ever-widening landscapes below, where glens and plains and far-away peaks burst into view, one after the other, while the great ravine called the Gulf of Mexico falls away into silent and sunless depths close beside. About a mile above the sea-level the track runs out on a high and massive trestle, the steepest part of the ascent, where, for every yard that the train advances, it must rise also a foot. Over the low crags of Mount Clay the cold east wind breaks, and agitates the dark patches of undergrowth below, *échelonné* about the head of the Gulf of Mexico. Slowly the quaint little engine pushes the train upward over a line of timbered piers heavy enough to uphold the monster locomotives which roar through the Raton Pass, while a sixfold system of checks is ready to bring it to a halt at any moment. The dense foliage of the forests below ceases here, and gives place to lichen-covered rocks, between which peep clumps of saxifrage and reindeer-moss, the vegetation of Labrador and Lapland. Within an hour the train has run from the temperate zone to the frigid zone. During the remainder of the ascent, which is more gradual, the desolation increases, the rocks assume an ancient and storm-worn appearance, and the horizon continually grows wider and more inspiring, until at last the superb and heart-stirring prospect includes points in five States and the northern viceroyalty.

The path over which the tourists of forty years ago slowly toiled, while the horn of Fabyan sounded in the clouds above, made a sharp ascent near the present railway-trestle; and the men of that day, still tinctured with the Puritanism of the morning era, ere yet (as Lowell saith) New England had become New Ireland, named this skyward ascent *Jacob's Ladder*, as if, perchance, the angels of God might have been seen by the eye of faith ascending and descending thereon. This quaint title has latterly been appropriated to the trestle, over which the toiling trains lift from six to eight thousand easy-going travellers every year. Up the heights, which seem impassable to even an Ariel, lightest of airy spirits, the ponderous locomotive moves onward with its convoy of crowded cars through and above the clouds, until it stands upon the crest which even the icebergs of the glacial age respected and stood aloof from. Only twenty years have passed since it was proposed by the legislators of New Hampshire, when a daft and impractical inventor asked for a charter to build this railroad, to so amplify the terms of the charter, that he might extend his track to the moon.



LIZZIE BOURNES MONUMENT, ON MOUNT WASHINGTON.

LIZZIE BOURNE'S MONUMENT.

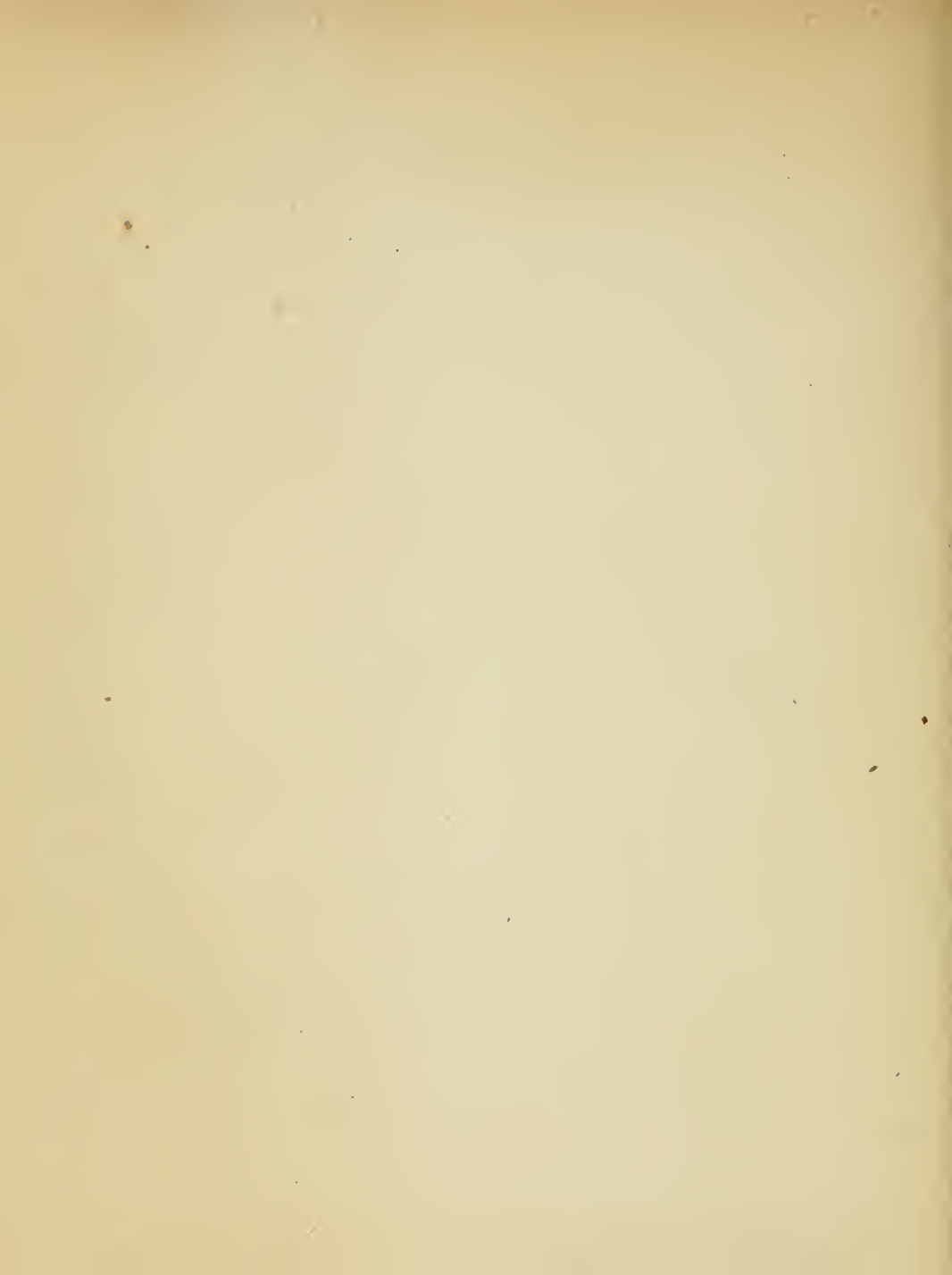


THE summer tourist, hoisted to the main-top of New England by a steam-elevator, and descending on the other side over a broad white road, borne breezily down in a comfortable carriage, can scarcely realize, that, to many a doomed soul, this peak has been as terrible as Sinai, and as accursed as Ebal. Some of these have been saved as by miracle; and others, wandering upward over vague paths, lost, chilled, and panic-stricken, have breathed their lives out into the frost-clouds, and left their bones on the cold black rocks. Had such tragic scenes happened among the Scottish or Rhenish mountains, they would have invested the fatal peak with a new and unfading charm of pathos; but in our more active life, where the front ranks are always full and advancing, they are well-nigh forgotten within a twelvemonth.

Yet the story of the death of Miss Lizzie Bourne can never pass out of memory, and is known to all who enter the New-Hampshire highlands. She rambled up the mountain, one bright September afternoon in 1855, with her uncle and cousin, and was tempted to try the ascent to the Summit House. The twilight came down, and with it a cloud of frosty mist, pierced by terrible winds: the path was lost; the benighted climbers became weary, bruised, and panic-stricken; and at last Miss Bourne sank down in exhaustion, and died within a few hours. All that night the survivors watched by her body; and at morning they saw (oh the pity of it!) that their fatal bivouac had been made within five hundred feet of the Summit House, where they might have found relief and warmth and life. On the place made thus sadly famous a rude cairn of stones was raised, and still remains, to remind the passengers on the railway what terrors once surrounded this huge dark peak. Throughout the long winters the frost decorates the monument with its rarest beauties of feathery forms, as if in eternal penitence for its fatal attack; and the black pile is converted into a magnificent mausoleum white as Carrara marble, and carved by the wind into forms as delicate as ever issued from the studios of Florence.



THE FRANKENSTEIN TRESTLE.



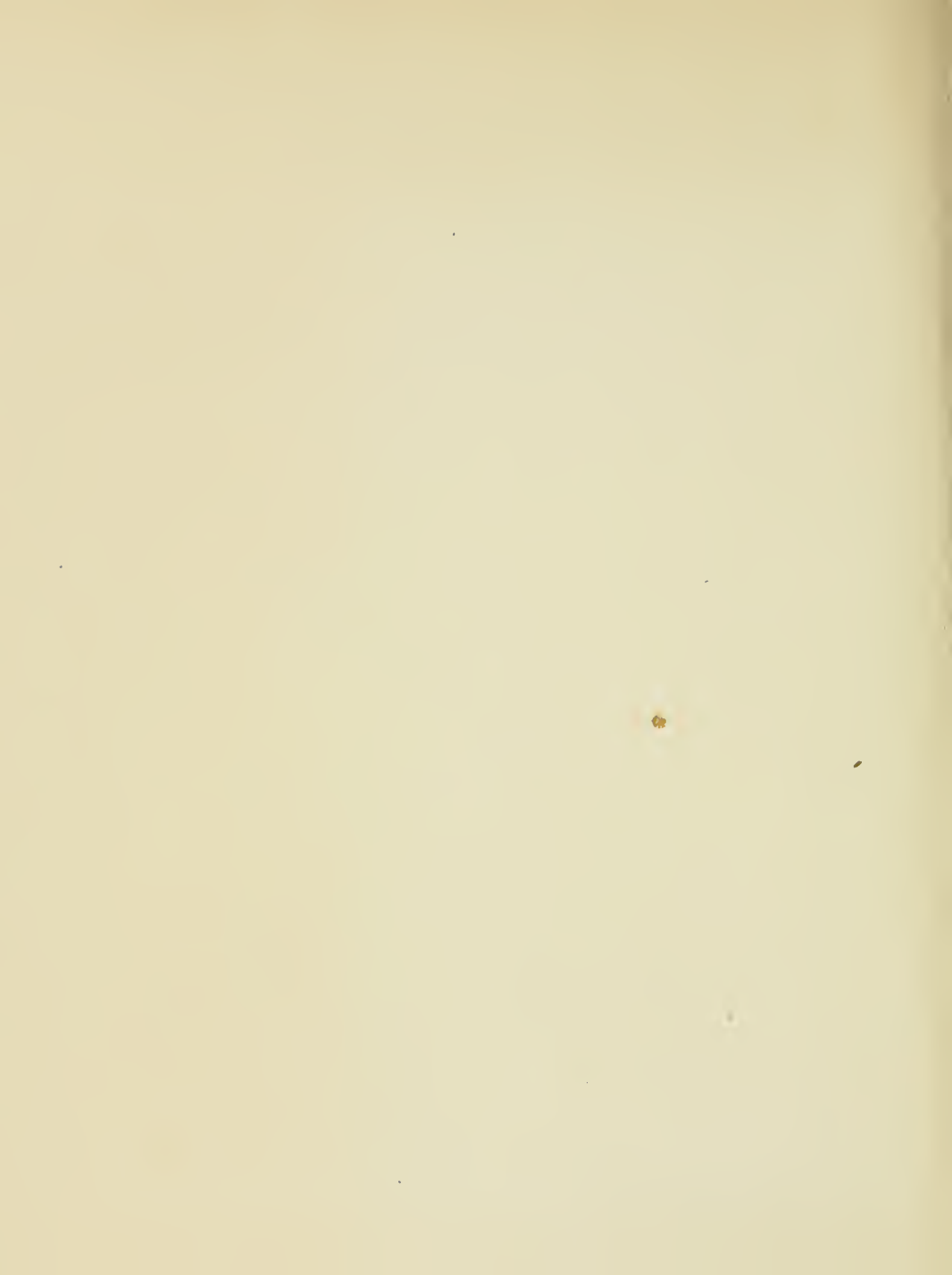
THE FRANKENSTEIN TRESTLE.

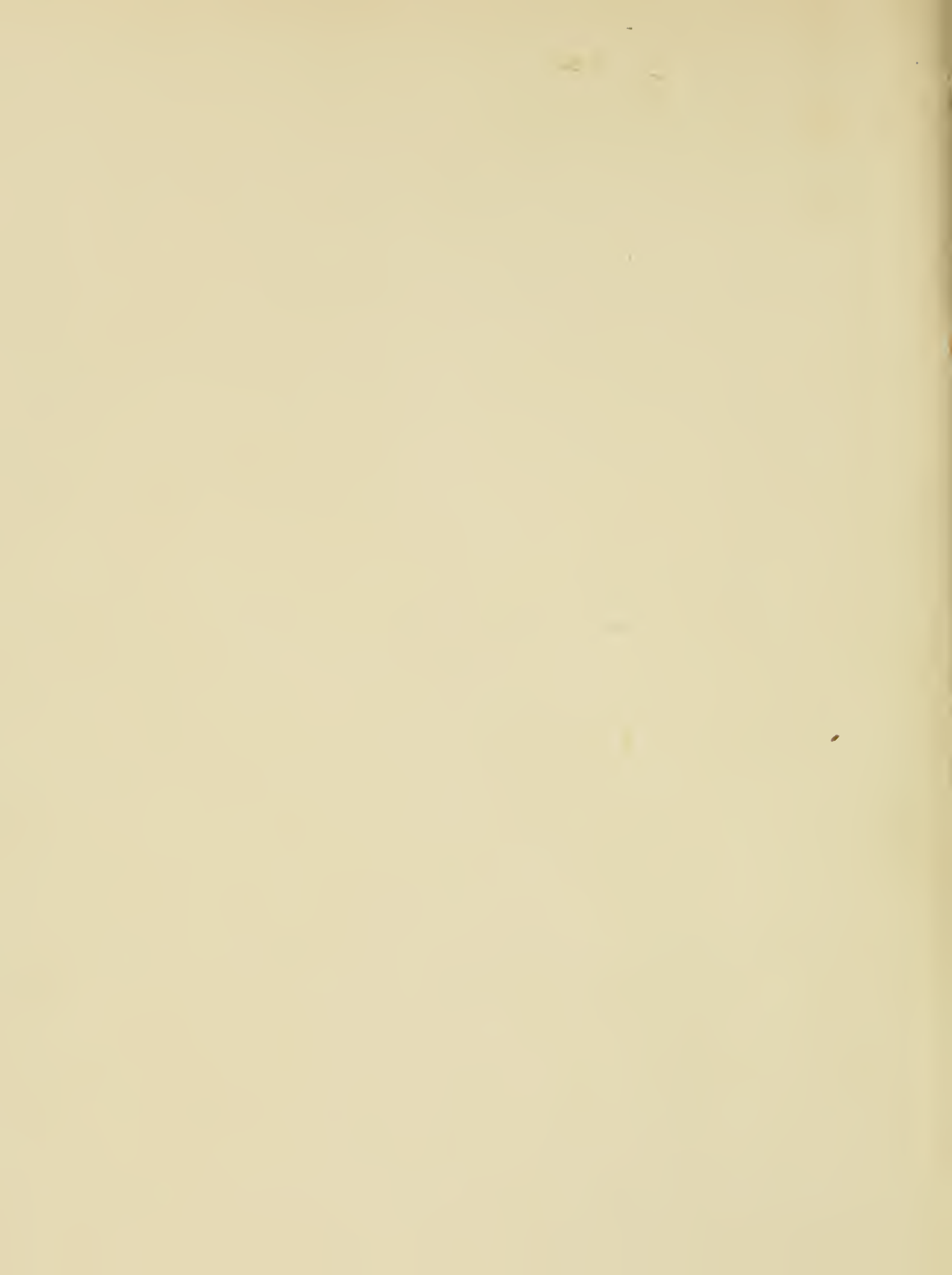


THE line of the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad, north of Bemis Station, crosses the bright brook which descends from the Arctusa Falls, and then traverses a series of cuts in the rocky flank of Mount Nancy. Suddenly the train emerges from the last of these trenches, and seems to leap boldly out into the air over a deep ravine which yawns below, flying at the face of the Frankenstein Cliff beyond. The amazed traveller, looking downward from the car-window, sees beneath a graceful and slender bridge supported on web-like iron piers which rise from the floor of the gorge, nearly eighty feet below. The train flies for five hundred feet over this mid-air path, and then moves on to the substantial foundations beyond.

Even this silent and solitary region has its romantic fables and its enchanted glens. One of the weirdest and most beautiful of the many Indian legends which pertain to the White Hills is that relating to the mystery of the Great Carbuncle, whose existence has been firmly believed in, within less than a century, by the yeomen of Western Maine. Hawthorne has used this theme as the basis of one of his inimitable "Twice-Told Tales," introducing the Lord de Vere, Doctor Cacaphodel, and Master Ichabod Pignort, among the seekers for the marvellous gem. The most ancient traditions tell that this object of such great desires was hidden in the glen of Dry (or Mount-Washington) River, which debouches into the Saco nearly opposite Frankenstein Cliff, whence it flashed its baleful light far over the lowlands, startling the rangers in their lonely night-camps, or arousing the pioneer farmers sleeping in their log-huts in the Saco Valley. One of the old chronicles quaintly says, "Hearing that a glorious carbuncle had been found under a large shelving rock, difficult to obtain, placed there by the Indians, who killed one of their number that an evil spirit might haunt the place, we went up Dry River with guides, and had with us a good man to lay the evil spirit; but returned sorely bruised, treasureless, and not even saw that wonderful sight."

Near the head of the same ravine one of the ancient hunters who dwelt among these hills claimed to have found two immense ledges, so overlaid with pure diamonds that their intense light blinded him. He carried out such bits as could be broken away, and sold them for a great price; but neither he nor the adventurous seekers who followed his track could ever find the treasure again. Occasionally a hardy fisherman enters the glen in our day, and returns with stores of shining trout, and mayhap a handful of glittering quartz-crystals.





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